

Q. Completion of the Temple

The temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar (part of February and March) in the sixth year of Darius I, King of Persia, i.e., in the spring of 515 B.C. The temple was completed according to the commandment of "the God of Israel" (Hag. 1:7,8), Cyrus (Ezra 1:2, 3:6:1-4), Darius I (Ezra 6:7), and Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-425 B.C. - Ezra 7:20,27). The completion of the temple was due largely to the encouragement and support of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah who, through their prophesying, brought about the resumption of the work on the temple (Hag. 1:7,8,12,14) and assured the people that the temple would be built (Zech. 1:16; 4:8,9).

R. Dedication of the Temple

The temple was dedicated to the Lord with joy (6:16). Sacrifices were offered to the Lord consisting of burnt offerings (100 oxen, 200 rams, and 400 lambs - 6:17a) and a sin-offering (12 he goats - one for each of the tribes of Israel - 6:17b). The priests and Levites were also appointed, according to their divisions and classes, to the service of the temple so that, from that time onward, they could fulfill their office, each division and class in its week (6:18).

← Note: The people to whom the Lord directed Haggai to deliver his message were the right people (Jews who were devoted to God) who were living in the right place (Jerusalem where God wanted His people to worship Him until the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus) who wanted to do the right work (rebuild the temple) for the right reason (to please God).

V. Exposition of Haggai

A. First Message (Hag. 1)

1. Time of the Message (Hag. 1:1)

a. Year

It was the second year of Darius the King (Hag. 1:1)

The Darius to whom Haggai refers is Darius I. Hystaspes (521-486 B.C.) and not Darius II. Nothus (424-395 B.C.) Why?

- (1) Because Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah and Joshua, the high priest were alive in the second year of Darius and that would have been impossible in the second year of Darius II. Nothus, since the second year of his reign was 113 years after Zerubbabel and Joshua had returned from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. (Ezra 2:1,2)
- (2) Because there were people alive in the second year of Darius who had seen Solomon's temple before it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar about 588 B.C. (Hag. 2:3), and that would have been impossible in the second year of Darius II Nothus since the second year of his reign was 165 years after Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the temple.